



DAVE DeRAN

the nature of his art

by Jack L. Shagena, Jr.

There are two kinds of artists in this world: those that work because the spirit is in them, and they cannot be silent if they would, and those that speak from a conscious desire to make apparent to others the beauty that has awakened their own admiration.

- Anna Katharine Green, *The Sword of Damocles*

Artist Dave DeRan is both. - The author



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Foreword

I met Dave DeRan in the early 1970s when he was exhibiting at the annual Bel Air Arts Festival. In 1976, he displayed his work at the old Maryland and Pennsylvania (Ma & Pa) railroad station in the former slate-mining town of Delta. It was there I bought my first DeRan watercolor, a bark-less log that a flood had deposited in a grassy green meadow. It was a simple image, solitary, isolated and serene, but DeRan's brush had definitely captured its essence. This would come to define his work – rural, rustic, and realistic.



The artist pointed out to me this particular painting was special. It had been originally completed in 1974, but did not sell, so two years later he had reworked it, adding a bit more color. It was, he noted, a double-dated DeRan.

With me that day was a friend, Signe. Thinking back sometime after we were married she confided, “I was glad the painting wasn't going to hang in my house.” It was not too long, however, before she became a devout DeRan fan and we now own more than sixty of his paintings that are proudly displayed throughout our home.

Over a period slightly exceeding forty years, DeRan has created more than four thousand pieces of art, most of which have been sold to an admiring clientele living within about fifty miles from where he paints. With two to three open-house shows each year at his Pikes Peak Road home/studio, and a mailing list approaching five hundred, he garners an eager market without stepping outside his door. He will do an occasional show in Washington, D.C., Bel Air, Maryland or York, Pennsylvania, but seldom travels far.



At one such show in York many years ago, Dr. Parker Wagnild, a music professor and director of the world-famous Gettysburg College Choir, wrote about DeRan's work, adding a prediction: “The pictures revealed the artist had eyes, sharpened by constant perception, which very few have, and his hand on the paint brush put objects on paper with delicate shadings. His prestige as a great artist is still in the shadows – but it will come.”

His moment of prestige and recognition is at hand. With this publication a wide audience will soon become aware of this extremely talented artist and the demand for his work will grow. This book is your passport down a little known pathway to artistic excitement never before experienced. Enjoy the journey.

Jack L. Shagena, Jr., Bel Air, Maryland, 2008